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FOREIGN DEPARTMENT



IN CHARGE OF
LAVINIA L. DOCK, R.N.

MISS STEWART'S WORK

THE coming gathering of nurses in May, in New York, will be shadowed by the great losses the nursing profession at large has sustained in the death of Miss Isla Stewart, and, nearer at home, in the break in health which has befallen Miss Ross, for twenty years so efficient and devoted. We must hope that she may regain her strength once more—knowing well that it might not have been lost had not a perfectly unselfish willingness to carry an ever heavier load of work and responsibility carried her beyond her strength. Miss Stewart, too, had she been willing to spare herself, might have lived to the old age that is considered normal, but she preferred to die at her post.

Our last letter from her was a most warm-hearted reply to the invitation to come to this spring's meeting; it was impossible; nothing would give her more pleasure than to come, and especially because she was a Nightingale nurse and would so enjoy the commemoration planned for. We will treasure this last letter from her, and will recall the visit she made us in 1901 at the time of the Buffalo congress.

Miss Stewart had filled a number of positions of voluntary service that were of great importance and exacted much of her. She founded the League of St. Bartholomew's Nurses and was its president until it was firmly organized; then she withdrew in the belief that it did not tend to a democratic self-government for the matron and superintendent of nurses to hold this position continuously, and that the nurses should take it. She has long been president of the Matron's Council of Great Britain and Ireland, corresponding to our Society of Superintendents of Training Schools, and every one knows that such a position means an immense amount of work. She was president of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, and this has meant not only constant service but a great deal of active warfare and an unceasing vigilance. She was a member of the nursing board of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, and held the position of the principal matron in the City of London Hospital No. 1 of the Territorial Force Nursing Service.

She held honorary positions in many societies and in different countries, and had been decorated by the *Assistance Publique* of Paris with a special medal for her great services to nursing. It was Miss Stewart who made room for the pupils from this department to take work in an English hospital, and she it was also who made Dr. Anna Hamilton welcome to the wards when she was conducting the investigations for her thesis—gave her an apron and a broom and the freedom of the hospital.

The final conference to organize the International Council of Nurses was held in her rooms and under her genial hostess-ship; she had already taken a part in the nursing section which Mrs. Fenwick had organized at the Congress of the International Council of Women in 1899 in London. Last summer's congress in London was the triumphant justification of all the painstaking care for organization that they two had taken; no trouble was too great for her to take for it; nothing was too good for the strangers who were to come from all countries; with the large hospitality that gave her happiness in seeing others happy, she arranged personally all the details of the evening reception at St. Bartholomew's Hospital which left so vivid and indescribable an impression upon her guests.

Had Miss Stewart lived to write her recollections she could have made a most delightful history. More than once we begged her to do so—to take a year off and in some quiet spot set down her reminiscences; but work always pressed too urgently. Her sense of humor and her optimism enlivened all of life, and this memory of her will come to cheer the friends she has left.

THE TUBERCULOSIS OF BAKERS

DR. MAURICE LETULLE, well known in France as a prominent physician who is keenly interested in social questions, gave an important paper some time ago at the meeting of the French Consumers' League on the subject indicated by the title, which has been reprinted in the *Bulletin Professionnel* of March 15, 1910.

Dr. Letulle tells of his own student days, when the medical chiefs taught him that bakers were so apt to be afflicted with what was called "baker's bronchitis" that it was regarded as the "occupation disease" of bakers, being taken for a chronic bronchitis. To-day, he says, it is known that this is the most formidable type of chronic tuberculosis, with which one may live long, enduring a miserable existence and being a source of infection to others.

Bakers are especially liable to this disease because of the particles

of flour dust, etc., which they breathe, and still more because of the great extremes of temperature to which they are exposed. Added to this, the hours of work for bakers are very often inhumanly long, and the night work which they must do is very exhausting. Every one knows that night work is more wearing than day work; opportunity for proper nourishment at night is lacking; bakers try to sustain their strength by alcoholic stimulants, which of course hasten their physical downfall. Tuberculosis among these workers is so frequent that every old baker may be regarded as tuberculous (70 per cent., say the statistics). In special hospitals and sanatoria the bakers head the list, with street sweepers, printers, etc. Baking is then a trade that needs the utmost protection. Night work should be abolished and hours of work shortened.

Another distinguished medical man, Dr. Laveran, has lately made an exhaustive report for the French authorities on the dangers of infection in the baking trade (the infection to the consumers being a real peril) in which he condemns on hygienic grounds the practice of kneading by hand and insists on the superiority of mechanical kneading by machinery.

In this country most horrible conditions in bakeries have been repeatedly exposed, while very little has been done to remedy them. Hygienic conditions of the work places are, of course, necessary; this is not contradicted by any one, but the safeguard of short working hours has so far been refused to bakers by legislatures or by the courts.

THE MAY MEETINGS

It seems probable that none of the foreign members of the International Council of Nurses will be able to come to America this spring. All are tied down with work, which seems to be at an unusually critical and important phase of growth in every country.

AN HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENT FOR SWEDEN

THE International Council of Nurses has the pleasure of announcing that Miss Thérèse Tamm has accepted the position of honorary vice-president for Sweden and will represent her country in that capacity in the future meetings of the Council.

THE Scottish Nurses' Association had a meeting in Glasgow in March, where a very interesting programme and discussion were carried on. Sir William Macewen, the president, reviewed the history of the association, formed some seven months ago, and then the ever-

absorbing subject of unequal standards, uneven preparation, uniform qualifications, and the whole question of the day came up.

It is pleasant to see that Mrs. Strong, formerly the matron of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, and whose long period of training-school administration was of a notably constructive and progressive character, has come back into organization work, to which she seems now to be giving the same whole-hearted service that she formerly gave her hospital.

American nurses will remember that Mrs. Strong came to America to the Buffalo congress, but was prevented by illness from attending the meetings. Her paper on that occasion is included in the congress reports, and may be re-read now with renewed interest. Mrs. Strong was the first to propose and organize a course of preliminary training for nurses in Great Britain. It was established at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary in 1893, and Mrs. Strong's paper tells of the sympathetic and practical share taken in it by Dr. Macewen, now the president of the national association.

We extend our warm good wishes to the Scottish Nurses' Association, and hope Mrs. Strong has not forgotten us, and that she may come to Cologne with a fine delegation from Scotland to renew the memory of old times.

Mosenthal, writing in the *Archives of Pediatrics* on the "Gastric Capacity of Infants," believes that the capacity of the infant stomach has been underestimated by the scientists who have made tables of the relative capacity at different periods after birth. Doubtless many mothers and nurses and all infants would agree with him in this conclusion. He finds that the whey passes into the intestines within ten minutes after milk is taken into the stomach, but that the curd requires from two to three hours to digest, and he concludes that the feedings should be at least three hours apart, but that a somewhat larger amount than has been considered the standard should be given at each feeding, as the stomach increases its size during digestion by elongation.